

Village of Cassadaga Comprehensive Five-Year Plan (2021 – 2025)

Approved by Cassadaga Village Board
02/10/2021

Final v1.0

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1. Executive Summary

The Board of Trustees of the village of Cassadaga (VBOT) authorized the Village Planning Board to develop a five-year Comprehensive Plan to guide village activities in the areas of growth, development, land use and quality of life improvements. The Planning Board took a number of steps to gather the information needed to complete the Comprehensive Plan. This work included gathering input from citizens and government officials, reviewing the current state of the village, and analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the village will face over the next five years. The Plan, as developed, will serve as an important road map for the village as it moves forward.

Based on the information gathered, the Planning Board developed a vision for the future of the village. The vision includes eight key themes : safety, small-town character, local business, conservation of natural resources, local history, recreation, citizen participation and community pride. The Planning Board then developed action plans to be completed over the next five years that support these themes. Some of the plans protect the existing status of the village while others provide guidance for future changes or development. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on several of the most highly prioritized action plans identified. Many other plans were discussed, and those that were related to other organizations will be shared with them for their consideration.

Cassadaga is a very special, close-knit community. Our abundant natural resources and green spaces, rural lifestyle, and strategic geographic location are all reasons for making sure we are guided by a managed plan. This plan serves as the vehicle for moving forward while preserving what makes the village so special to all who live, work and enjoy recreation here.

2. Village Profile

Municipality	<p>State of New York Chautauqua County Town of Stockton Website www.cassadaganewyork.org</p>
Location	<p>South end of lower Cassadaga lake Northwestern edge of the Allegheny plateau 42°20'29" North, 79°18'56" West</p>
Area	<p>Total 1.06 sq mi (2.74 km²) Land 0.84 sq mi (2.17 km²) Water 0.22 sq mi (0.56 km²)</p>
Elevation	<p>1,339 ft (408 m)</p>
Population	<p>Total (2010 census) 634 (steady decline since 1970 census (905)) 24.29 % under the age of 20 55.99% between 20 and 64 19.72% over the age of 64</p>
Funding Base	<p>Village revenue is approximately derived from: 50 % taxes from our village residents 45% from sales tax revenue 5% cable franchise and state aid</p> <p>The VBOT approves the annual budget in April The budget includes a \$12,000 contingency line item</p>
Zoning	<p>The zoning Map (2020) can be found in Appendix A</p> <p>Perimeter of the village: 4.18 miles 48% (R)esidential 10% (B)usiness (includes residential) 14% (C)onservation 10% (I)ndustrial 19% lake inside village limits</p>

3. Plan Purpose & Goals

The **Purpose** of this comprehensive plan is to provide clear guidance to the village Mayor, Board of Trustees, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning Board in the areas of:

- preserving and protecting the inherent attributes and strengths of our community
- anticipating and mitigating harm from threats posed on our community
- setting direction for planned and controlled improvements and growth for our community
- providing a baseline for periodically measuring effectiveness and progress so that modifications can be made to meet the plan

The **Goals** of the comprehensive plan are:

- to ensure that development and growth in our community will be desirable and in keeping with zoning requirements for community residents today and in the future
- to actively employ the Plan as a decision-making tool to benefit the welfare of the general community and are in accordance with the priorities for the next five years, as set by the Plan

4. Comprehensive Planning Process

As designated by the village Board of Trustees, the village Planning Board has authored this Comprehensive Plan for the village. It reflects current thinking on municipality development and management and also reflects the quality-of-life characteristics that are important to the community. By following the process briefly outlined below, and depicted in fig. 4.1., the Planning Board is confident that they had sufficient knowledge and resources to speak on behalf of the village residents in developing this plan.

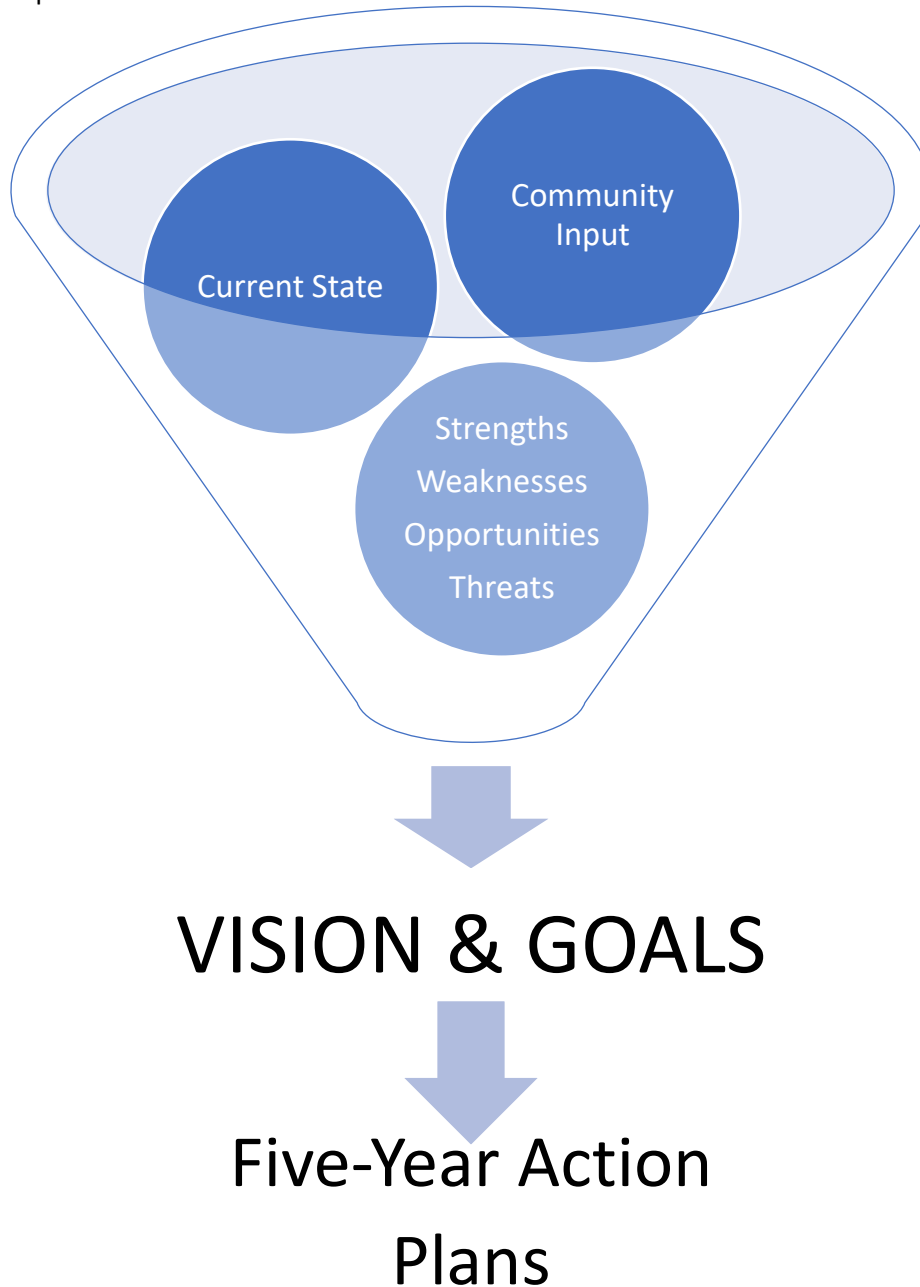


fig. 4.1

The development process consisted of the following:

1. **Team:** The team consisted of members of the Cassadaga Planning Board plus two subject matter experts, one having prior experience developing a Comprehensive Plan for a village of comparable size and complexity and the other having in-depth understanding of the village management, as gained through decades of service as a public official for the village.
2. **Training:** The team participated in the Comprehensive Planning Webinar offered by the State of New York in order to gain a common understanding of what was expected and involved in developing a Comprehensive plan. In addition, several examples of plans from other villages were reviewed and areas applicable to Cassadaga were utilized
3. **Vision:** The vision for the village, that drives the rest of this plan, was carefully crafted to identify the important defining factors for our community. The vision drove goal setting and action planning.
4. **Current State:** To create the starting point for planning future change, the team gathered information through documents and interviews on the current state of Cassadaga. The information gathered is the basis for Objectives and Actions.
5. **Community Input:** The team collected the opinions of local citizens through a survey covering key areas of community interest. Community responses can be found in Appendix B.
6. **SWOT:** Based on the Current State the team extrapolated the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats** facing our village and prioritized them, also taking into consideration the community input (Summary Appendix C.)
7. **Goals:** The Vision, SWOT and Community Input provided insight into setting target goals for achieving the desires and needs of the community.
8. **Themes:** The Vision statement highlighted the importance of eight key areas that served as the key themes driving action planning. The themes are; **Safety, Small Town Character, Local Business, Conservation, Historical Preservation, Recreation, Citizen Participation and Community Pride.**
9. **Recommended Action Items:** Each theme was evaluated relative to the current state and influencing factors and actions were identified to build on strengths, take advantage of opportunities, correct weaknesses and mitigate the impact of foreseen threats.
10. **Review/Approval:** There were four levels of review of the plan, each providing a different perspective of assessment.
 1. The VBOT review (special board meeting) provided insight into the relevance and feasibility of the Plan from the standpoint of government operations.
 2. The public review (public hearing) provided insight on citizen expectations and priorities.
 3. The county review (document submission to the County Division of Planning and Community Development) gave the county the opportunity to provide suggestions around scope and content.
 4. Department of Environmental Conservation impact review (submission of State Environment Quality Review (SEQR) Type 1 full form).

The final approval was given by the VBOT and the Chair of the Planning Board.

5. Community Five-year Vision

Our Vision is to be a **safe** community that will retain its unique **small-town character**, is supportive of its **local businesses**, reflects a strong **conservation** ethic, protects and celebrates its rich **local history**, promotes **recreation** and is reflective of active, inclusive **citizen participation** and **community pride**.



Photo by Mike Frame Images

6. Action Plan

6.1 Planning Board Objectives

Criteria for Taking Action

The most critical component of the Comprehensive Plan is the recommended action plans that have been selected to position the village Board and the community to address weaknesses and mitigate threats to our current strengths and to set priorities for taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

The following criteria check list represents the elements of an action item that need to be considered to achieve the value intended by the community:

- seen as a priority by the community
- is in alignment with one or more Vision Themes
- within the scope of the VBOT
- takes into consideration impacts on the environment and natural resources
- positively impacts the citizens of the village
- makes reasonable and acceptable demands of fiscal and human resources
- is feasible, given the time commitment and capabilities of the community

6.2 Recommended Action Plans

The following action plans are intended to sustain and/or improve the community. These plans were selected based on the priorities of the village for the next five years, as communicated through the community survey and public hearing review.

Special considerations for each action item, such as target completion dates and anticipated resources, are included in the Comprehensive Plan Progress tracking spreadsheet (Appendix C). Anticipated completion targets fall into yearly deliverable windows, based on priority and availability of resources.

A. Vision Theme: Safety

Safety is an important aspect in any community and keeping residents safe on our roads and sidewalks is imperative. We also want our community to feel secure in fire protection, emergency situations as well as maintaining safe drinking water and neighborhoods free of crime and blight. The following actions will enable our public services to continue to meet the needs of our community as well as make modifications as needed.

Objective A1: Road Safety is the responsibility of three different authorities: the state, the county and the village. Efforts to coordinate the maintenance and management of village roads is critical for keeping the public safe.

Action A1.1 Improve Speed Compliance

- continue to work with the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department to increase road patrol and enforce speed limits
- ensure timely maintenance of village roads and utilize shared services
- request deployment of speed control measures as dictated by changes in volume and/or high rate of non-compliance
- be proactive with county officials and other entities by participating in county-wide initiatives that impact road safety
- obtain speed-measuring device to record general practices and provide driver awareness of excess speeds
- zoning: include adequate setbacks of buildings to ensure visibility on roads

Objective A2: Home Safety is paramount to every resident and visitor.

Action A2.1 Community Protection and Emergency Aid

- enable a safe neighborhood environment
- encourage Neighborhood Watch and reporting of suspicious activity
- enforce NYS law 715¹ (grounds and procedures where use or occupancy is illegal)
- educate the public on the importance of roadway safety
- ensure funding for equipment and services
- zoning: control heights of buildings and separation of structures (set back)

Action A2.2 First Responder Recognition Program

- promote recruitment and training
- provide annual recognition of the Fire Department for their volunteer services

¹ NYS law 715 – Village of Cassadaga website www.cassadaganewyork.org

Objective A3: A safe and reliable public water supply is the responsibility of the village. Changes in demographics (population size and land utilization) can be influencing factors in the ability of the village to maintain the current quality standards.

Action A3.1 Delivery of safe drinking water

- continue water testing by trained village employees, as determined by New York State Health Dept.
- continue to ensure delivery of safe drinking water to village citizens and contracted customers

Objective A4: Strengthen the village’s position on code compliance and enforcement

Action A4.1 Village Zoning Law and NYS Fire Code Enforcement

- set expectations for the upkeep of commercial and business properties through the public communications venues available (village website, newsletters, letterhead, presentations, etc.)
- eliminate derelict homes or empty buildings that present a health threat to neighboring residents
- increase enforcement of municipal code and regulations pertaining to property maintenance, upkeep and appearance
- direct the public to contact the Chautauqua Home Rehabilitation and Improvement Corporation (CHRIC) for property upkeep services they may be able to provide
- zoning: review building regulations concerning availability of light, air, and open space and minimizing nuisances and visually unattractive developments to conform with this Plan.

B. Vision Theme: Small Town Character

The Village of Cassadaga (pop. 634 -2010 census) is a seasonal, historic, and tranquil lakeside community where people know their neighbor’s names and birthdays, live in generational homes, and say hi when they meet on a walk. Like many small villages it has experienced a population drain as young people seek professional and personal lifestyles in larger metro areas, affecting its economic foundation. Cassadaga’s population trend, however, is beginning to change as interest has increased and businesses and recreational activities have attracted newcomers to the community.

With the following objectives, this plan supports development that protects, manages, and enhances the village’s small-town character and are in line with county strategies as laid out in the county’s Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Objective B1: Strategically attract a younger demographic to put down roots in the village to stimulate future economic growth, vitality and a vibrant and socially, rich community.

Action B1.1 ‘Promote Cassadaga’ Campaign

- messaging
 - o form a “Promote Cassadaga” committee to develop a marketing plan that targets current and potential new residents
 - o draft value proposition messaging around what makes the community unique and desirable for young families
 - o fund development for creation of a logo and tagline that articulates Cassadaga’s marketable assets
 - o optimize the use of various digital media platforms to showcase and build awareness, (i.e., village website, linked related sites (CBC/CLA), Facebook, Instagram, hashtag links, outreach campaigns, etc.
- development
 - o facilitate a focus group to identify community needs/desires of youth and young families that are not currently being met and for future development to be marketed as a younger generation’s lifestyle
 - o draft and implement an improvement plan to be presented the VBOT for their consideration
 - o development of a village-centric youth council to work with local government and associated community-based organizations to encourage and empower involvement in the creation of adolescent and teenage programs and activities
 - o facilitate the creation of cultural arts, theatre and music programs with SUNY Fredonia, Chautauqua Institution, etc., offering partnership programs aimed at the village’s youth population

Objective B2: Plan for an increase in population, particularly the demands for adequate housing. Create opportunities for new residential properties and occupancy of existing and underutilized residential structures.

Action B2.1 Strategic Housing Plan

- identify person(s) to research, and draft a strategic housing plan for VBOT review, input, and approval
- zoning: review current regulations to determine if zoning supports new housing development in keeping with the current residential character of the village: green space, lot size, structure specifications
- identify potential land tracts for new residential development (within the village or adjacent land), providing details on marketable benefits
- identify vacant buildings/structures/residences that may be candidates for retro fitting or rehabilitation for resident occupancy. Provide justification for refurbishing efforts and investment funding

Objective B3: - Support development of senior housing options that address the village’s growing elderly population who desire to remain village residents; include single/multiple residential units, assisted living and/or skilled-nursing.

Action B3.1 Senior Housing Project

- identify person(s) to research and draft a senior housing plan for VBOT review, input, and approval
- identify village or adjacent land parcels for potential senior housing development
- research the options for potential public funding (local/county/state/federal) available to offer as incentives to senior living developers
- zoning: review current zoning and municipal codes to ensure alignment with property development, management and maintenance; recommend any new zoning requirements to set standards, if needed
- prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) and distribute to regional residential developers specializing in senior housing/assisted living property development and management to assess interest and feasibility for local development

C. Vision Theme: Local Businesses

Cassadaga has a small but well-balanced business community. Many of the needs of our residents are being met locally. This includes a grocery store, bank, laundromat, restaurants, lumber yard, convenience store, car repair/sales, salons, medical services and others. As a village, we want to support our local businesses as well as support adding businesses that provide or enhance the services needed by residents and visitors.

Objective C1: To fully support local businesses, we must know the businesses that are now in the community, what services are represented, and what businesses are missing. Are our businesses meeting all local needs; are important needs missing?

Action C1.1 Community Business Needs Assessment

- complete an inventory (profile) of local businesses by sector; include a process for keeping it current
- establish an on-going communication process with county governmental agencies charged with growing the business community and attracting new businesses to our area
- identify community needs not being met by current businesses
- develop plans to investigate bringing new businesses to Cassadaga to fill those needs
- zoning: review of current regulations to determine if they support new business development, including home-based businesses

Objective C2: As the village and business environment evolves, identify specific opportunities and threats to the business community and develop a process to react positively to change.

Action C2.1 Business Council

- investigate the feasibility of a business council to enhance communication and share ideas
- identify critical businesses and establish a communication process to understand their issues and provide support if feasible; include critical businesses outside village boundaries (Tim Hortons, Dollar General, Grocery/bank)

D. Vision Theme: Conservation

The quality of life in the village of Cassadaga is inseparably linked to its natural environment, which includes the lakes, tributaries, wetlands, trees and greenspace. Conservation of the natural resources and protecting the environment is paramount to the safety and enjoyment of the village for current and future generations.

Objective D1: To preserve and protect the health of the Cassadaga Lakes, its tributaries and wetlands. Strict management of the lakes is necessary in order to maintain their healthy future and mitigate threats. The current state of the lakes is considered eutrophic, indicating a high level of nutrients that leads to increased plants and algae growth, resulting in decreased oxygen levels. Also, lake levels have been higher than the norm for the past several years, likely caused by greater precipitation events and beaver dams in the Cassadaga Creek.

Action D1.1 Lakes Promotion and Preservation Program

- promote and preserve the Cassadaga Lakes by exercising best practices
- follow recommendations from lakes management plan (Cassadaga Lake Management Study², Joseph O’Reilly, 2019); lake level study (Managing Lake Levels study³, Andy Johnson, 2019)
- control lake levels and monitor, as per study recommendations, with CLA and community input
- maintain lakes health; monitor invasive and nuisance species, both animal and plant
- promote safe/clean lake recreational activities
- consider the benefits and feasibility of increased public access
- keep informed of the status of monitoring adjacent municipal and private sewer/septic systems for full compliance by the Chautauqua County Dept Public Health

Action D1.2 Wetlands Protection Program

- continue CLA’s on-going monitoring and enforcement
- encourage conservation of wetland properties; limit development in or near wetlands through strict enforcement of Cassadaga local law 1-2017⁴ on building near wetlands and DEC permitting regulations
- zoning: review zoning and compare to DEC wetlands map to ensure protective alignment with DEC regulations

² Cassadaga Lakes Management Study – Cassadaga Lakes Association website www.cassadagalakesassociation.com

³ Managing Lakes Levels study Cassadaga Lakes Association website www.cassadagalakesassociation.com

⁴ Local law 1-2017 – Village of Cassadaga website www.cassadaganewyork.org

Objective D2: Thanks to a dedicated team of local citizens, the village applied for and received recognition as a Tree City U.S.A. (Cassadaga local law 1 of 2019⁵). This substantiates a commitment to making trees a priority to the health and aesthetics of our community.

Action D2.1 Tree Preservation Program

- enhance and foster the village tree inventory
- empower the Tree Committee to oversee programs to increase numbers of village trees, i.e., free tree giveaway, tree co-payments, and to maintain existing tree inventory
- complete a current state tree inventory; determine the condition of tree/space balance
- apply to the DEC for the next round of tree inventory and community management plans
- establish a yearly village budget line item for tree purchasing, maintenance and arborist consultation

Objective D3: Promote green space (defined as areas of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetics in an otherwise urban environment) and green infrastructure to help prevent stormwater contaminants from flowing directly into the lake.

Action D3.1 Green Space Program (EPA)

- develop a green infrastructure plan as guided by the Environmental Protection Act
- encourage and educate on use of lakeshore buffers
- zoning: modify village zoning, if required, to meet the green infrastructure plan recommendations

⁵ Cassadaga local law 1 of 2019 - Village of Cassadaga website www.cassadaganewyork.org

E. Vision Theme: Local History

Cassadaga has a rich history that includes its early habitation by Native Americans and its settlement in the early 1800s. Having a village historian over the decades has kept our story well documented. Many Cassadaga artifacts are stored and displayed in several county facilities that also preserve county-wide history (Stockton, Fredonia, Sinclairville, Jamestown, Mayville). The goals of the village align with the state's historic preservation programs.

Objective E1: Ensure that there is a clear understanding of the expectations, deliverables, ownership, responsibilities, and budget related to the role of village historian.

Action E1.1 Historian Job Description

- create a village Historian job description
- appoint a lead and solicit volunteers to make up a historical interest group that will research and draft a historian job description. Invite local historians (past and present) to participate

Objective E2: Secure safe storage for historical records, publications and artifacts. There are a significant number of documents and items that are stored in personal residences and face the threat of physical damage (fire, water, mildew, theft).

Action E2.1 Historical Artifact Protection Project

- determine requirements/feasibility to secure a repository for historical items that currently are being stored in high-risk locations
- assess the availability of a building(s) that could serve as safe storage
- research ways to secure resources, funding and incentives around retrofitting an existing building
- identify and make resources (include volunteers) available to village citizens who have possession of local artifacts ("care takers") so that they can make informed, responsible decisions about safe storage and future dispositioning, such as inheritance or gifting

Objective E3: Respect the historic buildings in Cassadaga. These structures represent a page in our past. Before it is no longer feasible (i.e., they fall to new development, neglect, etc.), there is an opportunity to address their documentation and preservation.

Action E3.1 Historical Building Recognition Project

- form an interest group to research and inventory the pre-1920 structures in the village (year built, architectural style, inhabitances, uses, fun facts, etc.)
- build off of the work completed by the CBC and use the county property tax records as a resource
- make information on the buildings available to the public (pamphlet, information plaques, library display, etc.)
- zoning: review zoning laws to determine if there are vulnerabilities that could be mitigated with updates to zoning

Objective E4: Create an opportunity to capture verbal memories. There is a growing risk of losing knowledge of some of our history.

Action E4.1 'Our History in Memories' Project

- kick-off a campaign to surface and document memories of historical relevance
- work with the library to create a 'History Show and Tell' program series (host talks, panel discussions, Today vs Yesterday youth and senior challenges, etc.), target the participation of our senior citizens and local history buffs

Objective E5: Preserve and honor local Native American contributions

Cassadaga is very rich in Native American history and legacy as the lakes were the seasonal fishing encampment for early mound builders and later the Seneca Nation. The village name, Cassadaga, is Seneca for 'water beneath the rocks.'

Indian artifacts were often found when digging (basements, utilities, landscaping, etc.) that give evidence of their way of life around campfires and living quarters. Many locals have collections of these artifacts (arrow heads, cooking tools and vessels).

Action E5.1 Native American History Project

- form a Native American history interest group
- take inventory of the Native American artifacts in the possession of local citizens
- partner with the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum and Cultural Center for guidance on the appropriate actions to take to respect and preserve the artifacts
- add recognition of and education on our area's native heritage to our Cassadaga historical story by setting up a native American educational area in the library and include a piece on our native history in village promotional materials
- zoning: review zoning laws to determine if there are vulnerabilities that could be mitigated with updates to zoning

F. Vision Theme: Recreation

Health and wellness, physical activity and immersion into the natural environment are key in building and maintaining a strong, active, positive community. Cassadaga may be restricted in its land area but is very large when it comes to natural resources and four-season recreational opportunities. The following objectives build upon the Complete Streets Policy adopted by the village and the completion of the Chautauqua County Health Network Complete Streets Report (2017).

Objective F1: Keep the safety of our waterways, streets, and sidewalks, for swimmers, cyclists and pedestrians, a high priority for the village.

Action F1.1 Park Avenue Safety Project

- complete a Safety Study around public use and traffic on Park Avenue considering the width of the road, the amount of pedestrian usage and recreational traffic
- secure funding and complete the approved recommendations of the Park Avenue Safety Study

Action F1.2 Pedestrian Safety Program

- propose a pedestrian safety plan to county and state DOT officials to update painted sharrows (road surface markings), complete painted crosswalks at all appropriate intersections and install the appropriate signage
- zoning: review/revise zoning laws to be proactive in pedestrian safety in regards to signage, speed control, new building set-backs and existing properties maintaining vision sight lines to prevent accidents and death
- include funding, each budget cycle, for maintenance and enhancement of sidewalks, roadway shoulders, outdoor facilities, crosswalks, sharrows and signage for sharing the road with cyclists and pedestrians
- continue to support the Citizens for a Better Cassadaga (CBC) recommendations presented from the Walkability Study⁶ completed in 2018 and the Safe Streets⁷ initiative
- keep streets and shoulders clear and safe by year-round attention to debris removal and maintenance of catch basins

⁶ Walkability Study – Citizens for Better Cassadaga website www.cbccassadaga.org

⁷ Safe Streets - Citizens for Better Cassadaga website www.cbccassadaga.org

Objective F2: Continue to support year-round recreational activities within the village and surrounding areas to increase focus on health and well-being.

Action F2.1 Ball Field Utilization Program

- continue to prioritize maintenance of the village owned ball fields
- create a focus group to consider recreational land use models, like the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation Guidelines and Project Play, to come up with a plan for the best use of the ball fields
- execute the plan under an ongoing improvement program, based on resource and financial availability

Objective F3: Ensure that our public beach facility is kept updated and maintained for the health and enjoyment of village residents and visitors. Increased use of the beach over the past several years has put more demand on managing this facility.

Action F3.1 Beach Enhancement Project

- commit to allocating additional funds in the village budget to sufficiently cover the cost of beach management, maintenance, upgrades and cleaning
- recommendations:
 - upgrade and/or replace the restroom facilities and extend hours of use
 - upgrade the charcoal grill to gas grills
 - provide a small craft launch area
 - increase waste/recycling receptacles and pickup schedule
 - continue to grow the summer youth recreation program

G. Vision Theme: Citizen Participation

Village residents are engaged in a variety of community activities (CLA, CBC, beach, library, Fire Dept., Auxiliary, Scouts, Legion, food bank, village government, municipal services, etc.) which are positive contributing factors to the vitality of the village and its quality of life.

Objective G1: Increase viewership and event engagement through effective, consistent and timely communication utilizing and leveraging the various digital and traditional platforms that already exist to promote village activities.

Action G1.1 Community Communication Program

- identify person(s) to develop and implement a community communication “office” as a comprehensive point of service for community messaging (announcements, promotions, calendars, alerts, etc.)
- build on the village brand to effectively communicate messages and events via all associated communication platforms and links
- secure a resource to oversee communication function, coordinating efforts with local organizations, activities, and events to effectively communicate to all village residents and non-residents
- allocate budget funding to update/redo current village website to effectively communicate village brand messaging and co-brand with village-related organizations and links; look to resources available through Southern Tier West

Objective G2: Increase resident involvement through ongoing event development and promotion.

Action G2.1 Community Engagement Program

- continue to support, through funding and promotion, current programs sponsored by local organizations: CBC, CLA, legion, fire department, scouts and local businesses
- declare and plan activities for an annual “Celebrate Cassadaga Day” with events like an old-time street dance, street picnics, beach carnival
- launch a citizen’s recognition program to acknowledge outstanding volunteer contributions to the village’s quality of life

H. Vision Theme: Community Pride

What fosters community pride is individual efforts by all to contribute to the well-being and outward appearance of the municipality. Given the traffic volume through the village on Route 60, the village is missing an important opportunity to present a best first impression for travelers. The focus is firmly centered on the condition, appearance and aesthetics of the village's at-risk areas to include the north and south highway entrances. Other spot areas should also be identified and addressed for impact action.

Objective H1: Work collectively, as a community, to instill pride in our community and have it reflected in our homes, businesses, parks and recreational areas, government entities, charitable giving, etc.

Action H1.1 Cassadaga Pride Campaign

- form a "Cassadaga Pride" committee to research potential activity; develop implementation plans with budgets and resources needed to launch and maintain on-going program management
- initiatives for consideration:
 - o Post Office Block Development - work with owners of the historic post office mini-block to develop a signature statement for the village
 - o gateway entrances – North, South and West – work to enhance with signage, landscaping, infrastructure improvements, business and residential upkeep/upgrades to ensure optimum appearance at each primary village entrance
 - o community-wide beautification program – launch a spring clean-up, flower-planting, lawn clean-up, "big stuff" junk pick-up day, etc.
 - o Cassadaga in Bloom Program – village-centric program coordinated with the Chautauqua County program
 - o Public Art Program – develop a program similar to the bison statue program in Buffalo; feature an animal/iconic symbol reflective of Cassadaga life – possibly fish, trees

I. 'Next Step' Actions

In addition to the objectives and actions that directly relate to the themes of our Vision, there are actions that build off of and serve as enablers for completion of the comprehensive plan.

Objective 11: The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for village actions in the areas of growth, development and land use. To this end, this Plan will be the basis for a review of the village's zoning laws intended to ensure that these laws align with and support the vision and objectives stated in this Plan. A review of current local laws will be undertaken.

Action I1.1 Zoning Law Review

- a committee, appointed by the VBOT, will conduct a review of all Zoning laws to ensure they support the directives presented in this plan
- recommended changes to be presented to the VBOT for their approval

Action I1.2 Village Local Law Review

- a committee, appointed by the VBOT, will conduct a review of all village local laws for the purpose of upgrading and consolidating the local laws to meet current demands as well as the directives presented in this plan
- recommended changes to be presented to the VBOT for their approval

Objective 12: The village has a relatively stagnant financial base and a limited contingency budget for support of village initiatives, such as many of the theme action items. This poses a limitation on how successful the village can be in funding discretionary projects. Opportunities exist to pursue alternate funding sources to augment village funding.

Action I2.1 'Adopt a Village' Project

- develop a proposal to present to non-profit foundations for potential funding of a five-year village revitalization program to address: housing, infrastructure, business development, main street revitalization, tourism/recreation, environmental conservation, history/culture, quality of life services, safety

7.0 Accountability

7.1 Approval of the Comprehensive Plan

It is the responsibility of the Planning Board and the Village Board of Trustees to approve the Comprehensive Plan. Approvals are documented in the Revision Tracking Section 7.3.

On approval, the “recommended” action items become actionable and the full content of the Comprehensive Plan then serves as guard rails for decisions made by the Mayor, Village Board of Trustees, and Planning Board. It also serves as a point of reference and the basis for the Village Zoning Code and Village By-Laws.

As new initiatives, decisions, by-laws, building and zoning codes, policies, etc., are under consideration, the Criteria for Taking Action check list in Section 6.1 should be considered in order to keep focus on the intended objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

7.2 Performance Measurement

A plan is only as good as it performs. In order to keep the plan and recommended action items pertinent and positioned for implementation, this plan will undergo an **annual review** by the Planning Board and the results of the review will be reported to the Village Board of Trustees. This review will assess progress towards annual goals as well as revisit opportunities and threats to confirm that they are still a priority for the village.

In addition to the annual review, the Planning Board will solicit status on the actionable items as a **semi-annual check-in**. If any issues of significant impact are identified, the Planning Board will bring them to the attention of the VBOT for their information and action.

The Comprehensive Plan Progress Tracking spreadsheet in Appendix D will be updated to reflect the findings for each annual review and semi-annual check-in.

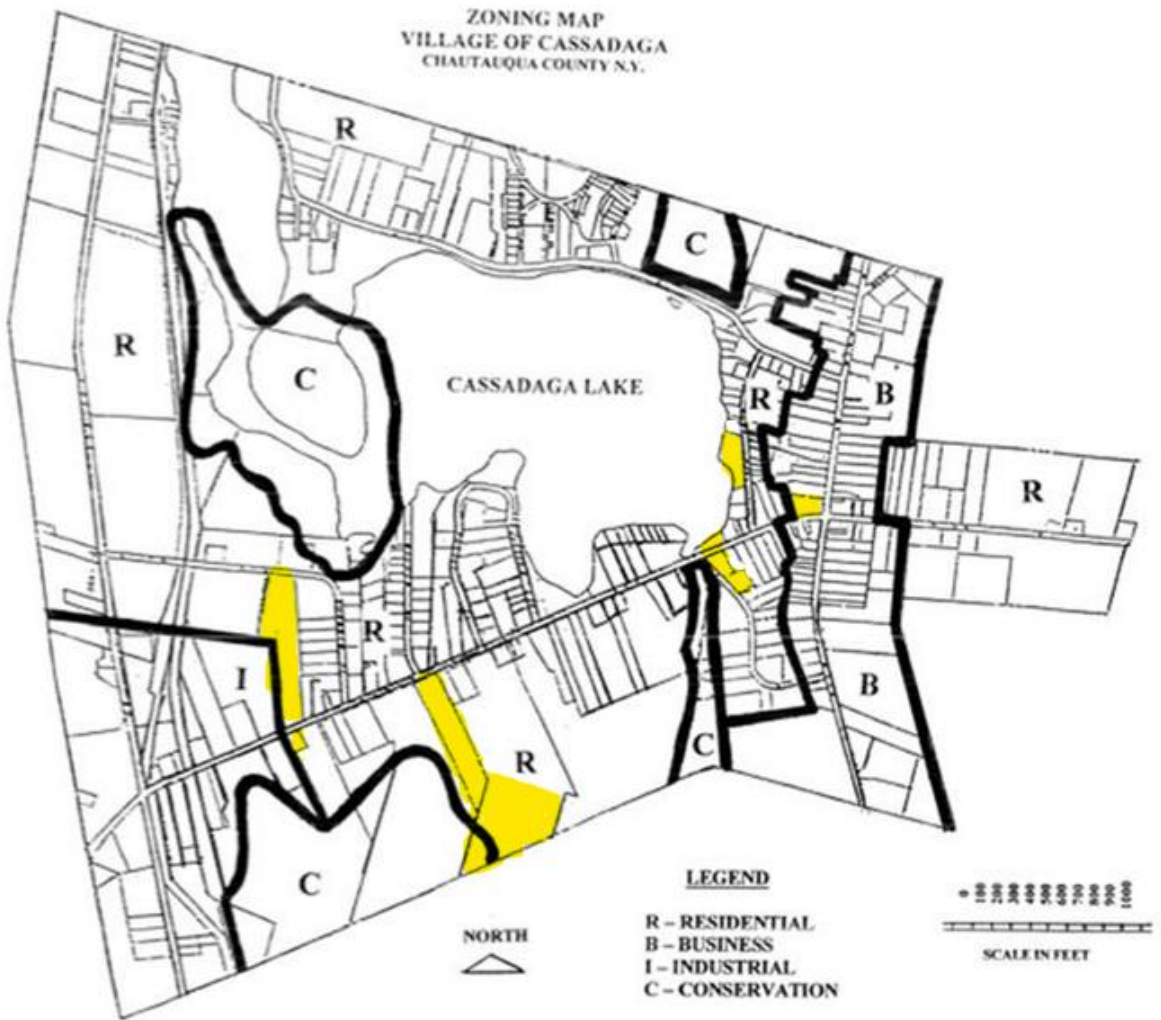
7.3. Plan Document Management - Review/Revision Tracking

Version #	Revision	Prepared by	Approved By	Issue Date
0.7.1 - .4	Draft for VBOT	CCP 2020 Team*	CCP 2020 Team*	11/02/20 12.04/20
0.7.5	Draft for Chautauqua County Planning review, includes VBOT input	CCP 2020 Team*	VBOT	12/15/20
0.7.5.1	Draft for Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) - SEQR Action form	CCP 2020 Team*	DEC	12/20/20
0.8.2	Draft for Public Hearing, includes VBOT & Chautauqua County Planning input	CCP 2020 Team*	VBOT	1/21/21
1.0	Final for VBOT approval – includes community, DEC approval and county input	CCP 2020 Team*	VBOT Planning Board Chair	2/3/21
*CCP Team	Jim Holton – Planning Board (Chair/member thru Aug. 2020) Nancy Wickmark – Planning Board (Chair) Peter George – Planning Board Rod Waite – Planning Board Sue Asquith – Planning Board Tonia Wilson – Planning Board Roxanne Astry – Village Clerk			

Appendix

Appendix A – Village Zoning Map

Yellow highlight represents village owned properties



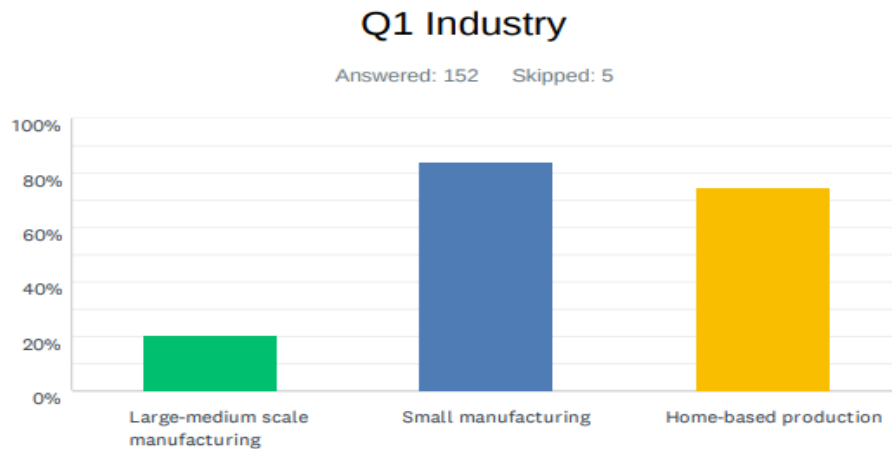
Appendix B - Community Input Survey

The Cassadaga Village Board asked the Village Planning Board to develop a vision statement and Comprehensive Plan for the Village. The Plan needed to answer the question: What should our Village look like over the next 5 years? Village resident input was critical in guiding the planning board in the direction seen most important to a majority of the residents.

The responses to the over-arching question “Would you support the following...” are represented in the graphic tallies for each of eight topics:

1. Industry
2. Agriculture
3. Housing
4. Business
5. Tourism
6. Recreation
7. Conservation
8. Community Image

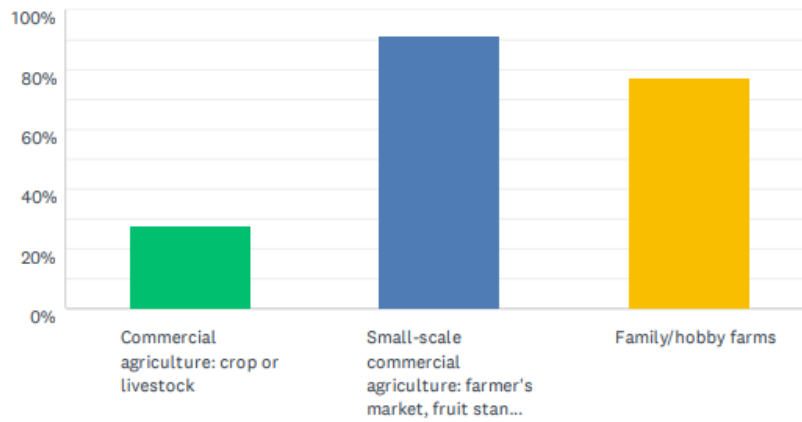
The ninth question delineated the number of village resident vs non-village resident responses.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Large-medium scale manufacturing	20.39%	31
Small manufacturing	84.21%	128
Home-based production	74.34%	113
Total Respondents: 152		

Q2 Agriculture

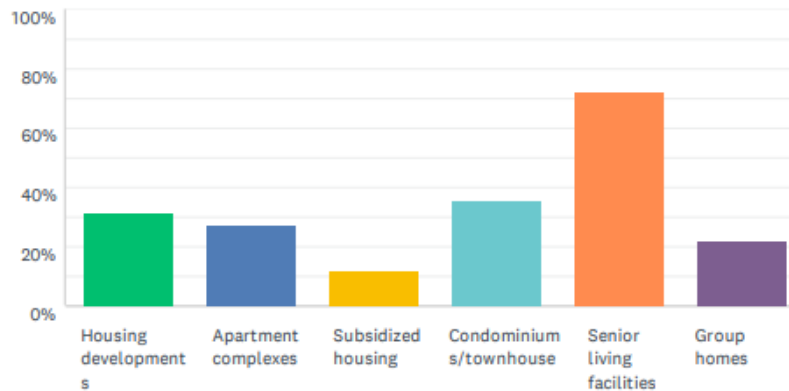
Answered: 155 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Commercial agriculture: crop or livestock	27.74%	43
Small-scale commercial agriculture: farmer's market, fruit stand or local grocers	91.61%	142
Family/hobby farms	76.77%	119
Total Respondents: 155		

Q3 Housing

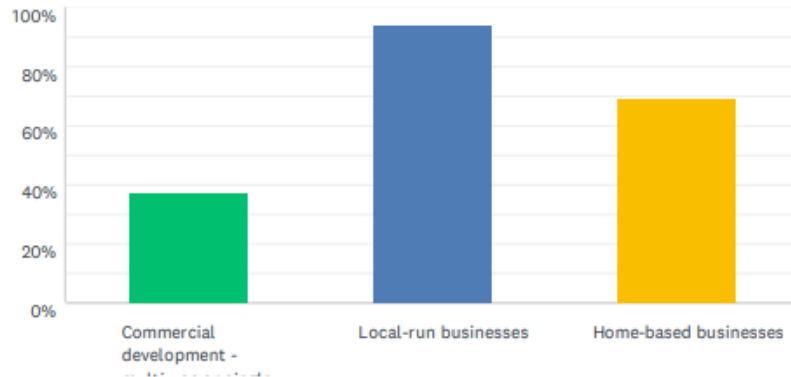
Answered: 127 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Housing developments	31.50%	40
Apartment complexes	26.77%	34
Subsidized housing	11.81%	15
Condominiums/townhouse	35.43%	45
Senior living facilities	72.44%	92
Group homes	22.05%	28
Total Respondents: 127		

Q4 Business

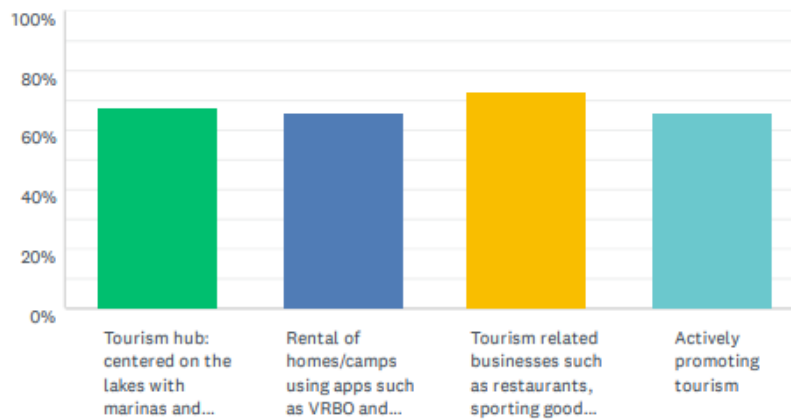
Answered: 155 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Commercial development - multi-use or single	37.42%	58
Local-run businesses	94.19%	146
Home-based businesses	69.03%	107
Total Respondents: 155		

Q5 Tourism

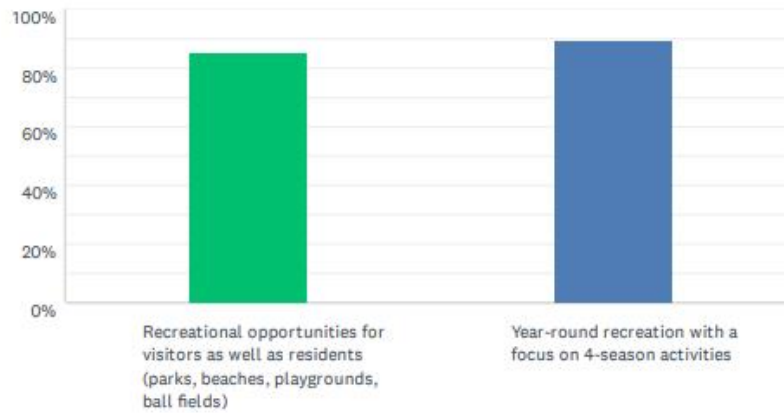
Answered: 147 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Tourism hub: centered on the lakes with marinas and other water activities	67.35%	99
Rental of homes/camps using apps such as VRBO and Airbnb	65.31%	96
Tourism related businesses such as restaurants, sporting good stores	72.79%	107
Actively promoting tourism	65.31%	96
Total Respondents: 147		

Q6 Recreation

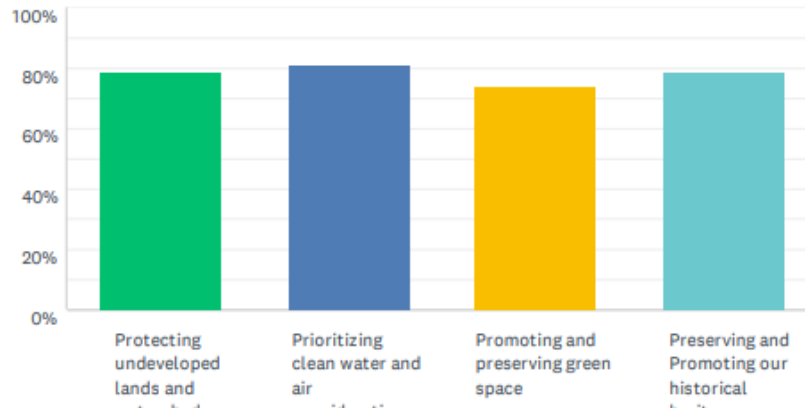
Answered: 151 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Recreational opportunities for visitors as well as residents (parks, beaches, playgrounds, ball fields)	85.43%	129
Year-round recreation with a focus on 4-season activities	89.40%	135
Total Respondents: 151		

Q7 Conservation

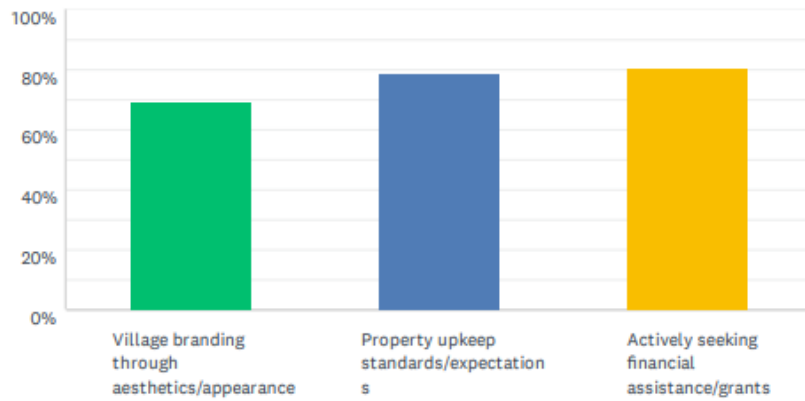
Answered: 154 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Protecting undeveloped lands and watershed	79.22%	122
Prioritizing clean water and air considerations	81.17%	125
Promoting and preserving green space	74.03%	114
Preserving and Promoting our historical heritage	79.22%	122
Total Respondents: 154		

Q8 Community Image

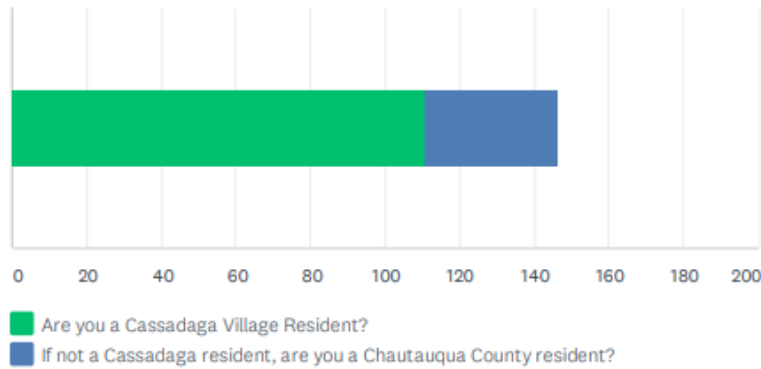
Answered: 148 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Village branding through aesthetics/appearance	69.59%	103
Property upkeep standards/expectations	79.05%	117
Actively seeking financial assistance/grants	80.41%	119
Total Respondents: 148		

Q9 Residency

Answered: 150 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Are you a Cassadaga Village Resident?	74.00%	111
If not a Cassadaga resident, are you a Chautauqua County resident?	23.33%	35
Total Respondents: 150		

Appendix C – Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT)



Strengths

- beautiful lakes at the heart of the community
- high degree of community involvement
- strong interest in fitness and year-round social activities
- pro-active lakes management
- safe pedestrian walk-ways
- community investment in conservation of green space
- community investment in historical preservation
- centrally located on the main North-South county highway
- active community library

Weaknesses

- vacant/underutilized business real estate
- lack-luster first impression
- low income area
- shrinking/aging population
- lack of traffic/speed enforcement
- minimal visitor accommodations
- relatively high taxes, while shrinking tax base
- decrease in reasonably priced housing



Opportunities

- enhance education programs
- proactive lake health management
- bolster local business community
- prioritize tree replacement
- revitalize deteriorated/ derelict homes
- target attracting young families
- utilize public land to benefit the community

Threats

- loss of historical knowledge and artifacts
- population decline
- lack of affordable housing
- over development and loss of green space
- breakdown of resident and neighboring sewer treatment
- decline of old growth shade trees
- invasive water species
- loss of locally owned businesses
- traffic/pedestrian safety
- decisions by surrounding municipalities

